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## THAMES WATERMEN.

At one time—now a century or more ago—the Thames was recognised as the only great London thoroughfare. Its banks on either side were studded with the 'stairs' of the nobility; its waters were covered with every kind of craft, from the gilded barge of royalty to the nutshell skiff or wherry. In those days the river was pure and undefiled; and those who lived upon its banks never hesitated to bathe there in balmy weather. In those days there was no spot in London so picturesque as the Strand, with its broad gardens, its shady trees extending to the water's edge, where 'the river glideth at its own sweet will,' and where the embattled turrets of many a palace, such as the Savoy, towered artistically in the background. Flocks of swans sailed to and fro in spite of the traffic: they ventured unmolested even below bridge; and the sight of them and their quaint 'song' must have been vastly agreeable to the Thames watermen and their fares. 'Pray, did you come with oars or scullers?' was an every-day question. Citizens spoke of 'taking the water' very much as we now speak of taking an omnibus or cab. The watermen's fares were regulated by the company's printed scale of charges; the Hall of the Watermen's Company, where all their business was transacted, being then situated at Coldharbour, near the Vintry. Some forty thousand watermen were upon the rolls of the company, those of the King's Court and the nobility being no doubt included in this number; and the company was in a position to furnish the navy with as many as twenty thousand men.

The aquatic sports, still to be seen among the boatmen of the Seine and of the Rhine, were once the delight of the London watermen during their Easter holidays. One famous sport consisted in two wherries, each rowed by a couple of watermen, running against each other with staves in hand—a recreation much in vogue among the gondoliers of Venice. An-

other sport among the watermen was to hang a shield on a pole in mid-stream; while in a boat without oars stood a waterman, lance in hand, ready to charge at the shield when carried swiftly towards it by the force of the tide. If he broke his lance against the shield without going overboard, he was thought to have performed a valiant deed. But it more frequently happened that he went head over heels into the water. He was instantly recovered, however, by 'watermen in waiting,' amidst the derisive shouts of the crowd upon London Bridge, on the wharfs, and from the houses and grounds by the river-side.

Then there came in later days the sport of winning Doggett's far-famed prize. It is rowed for—and has been for nearly two hundred years—by six young watermen, whose apprenticeship has expired the year before. To have endowed the river with an annual coat and silver badge was a brilliant thought on the part of the actor. It has helped to keep up the famous traditions of the old Thames watermen; and besides, did it not inspire Dibdin to create his immortal 'Tom Tug?'

And did you ne'er hear of a jolly young waterman,

Who at Blackfriars Bridge used for to ply?

He feathered his oars with such skill and dexterity,

Winning each heart and delighting each eye.

In his despair, however, of winning Wilemina, he resolves at last to give up the life of a waterman and take himself off to sea:

Then, farewell, my trim-built wherry,

Oars and coat, and badge, farewell!

Never more at Chelsea ferry

Shall your Thomas take a spell.

But Tom changes his mind, and determines to row for the coat and badge, after all, in order to win his love if possible by winning the prize. Wilemina watches the race from the Swan Inn, Chelsea, and applauds the winner before she discovers him to be her persistent suitor, Thomas. A blush was her 'answer to

his wooing tale;' and so it all ended happily. This old Swan Inn was swept away some twenty years ago to make room for the Thames Embankment; and the coat and badge is now rowed for from Cadogan Pier to Chelsea. It is worthy of note that Garrick selected *The Waterman* to follow the comedy of *The Wonder* on the night of his last appearance on the stage, so popular was the character of Tom Tug at that time.

It is interesting to glance for a moment at the watermen's table of charges before the days of the penny steamboats. A 'fare' could then be carried 'with oars' for a shilling from London Bridge to Limehouse, or Shadwell. Eightpence was the charge from the Temple Stairs, or Blackfriars, to Lambeth: while sixpence would frank a fare from London Bridge or Tooley Street, on the opposite side of the river, to 'Wapping Old Stairs.' The cost for being ferried 'over the water' at any Stairs between Vauxhall and Limehouse was fourpence. For longer journeys the rates were proportionately higher. For instance, to Gravesend the fare was four and sixpence; to Windsor it was fourteen shillings. These latter places were the extreme limits denoted in the watermen's printed tables.

They were a rough, saucy, and independent class, these old Thames watermen. One is constrained to draw this conclusion from the constant allusions to them in old comedies and popular songs of the last century. They were notorious for their water dialect or mob language: they accosted each other as they rowed by in the most abusive language they could invent. But at the same time it is only fair to record, they put as much satirical humour into their repartee as they were capable of. Their questionable phraseology led to innumerable complaints. Fielding speaks quite touchingly about it in his *Voyage to Lisbon*; while Sir Roger de Coverley expresses in the *Spectator* his sense of repugnance at the language with which he was assailed while taking boat on the Thames; and so it came about at last that, by order of the Watermen's Company, this extemporaneous 'satire' was prohibited. Any waterman or apprentice convicted of using bad language was fined half-a-crown for each offence.

They had an ear for music, though, these uncouth 'hearts of oak,' and kept time with their oars to many a lively ditty. Their songs were less sentimental, of course, than those of the gondolier; there was a manly ring in them—something of the brine and the breeze, to which these men of the Thames had a certain kinship. The famous river song, 'Row the Boat, Norman,' was sung on the Thames for many a year. Its origin can be told in two words. Before Sir John Norman was elected in 1453 Lord Mayor of London, it was usual for the chief magistrate and his train to go to Westminster Hall on horseback. But he, to the watermen's unbounded delight, elected to go there by river; and he accordingly built a magnificent barge to be used during his mayoralty. The officials connected with this waterpageant included the water-bailiff, one of his lordship's esquires, a shallop and eight men; and in the suite were a barge-master and thirty-

two city watermen. The City companies followed Norman's example, and constructed gilded barges to accompany their mayors. The watermen still take part in the Lord Mayor's show: the trumpeters who formerly heralded, from the prow of his barge, his lordship's approach to Westminster, now precede on foot, in all civic State ceremonies, his lordship's State carriage.

Although the river was so great a thoroughfare in the old days, it was by no means safe at all places and at all seasons. Loss of life was not an infrequent occurrence while accomplishing the feat of passing under Old London Bridge, owing to the narrowness of the arches. There was no embankment of any note; and the river was therefore broader in many parts than in the present day, and ferrying across was not always an easy matter. It was all very well in summer-time for watermen to row their fares, with the tide in their favour, under the 'chequered shades of Millbank willows.' But on rough, wintry nights it was as risky to ferry across the river as it is to cross from Dover to Calais in a steamer of the present day. Indeed, before the building of Westminster Bridge, the only communication between Westminster and Lambeth was by ferry-boat; and there were two considerable inns for the reception of travellers who, arriving after dark, dreaded to take the water in the face of a high wind or strong tide.

The most conspicuous among the old Thames watermen was John Taylor, the Water-poet. He literally gained his livelihood by plying on the river. The 'gentlemanlike sculler,' as a contemporary dubbed him, lived in a poetical atmosphere; for he plied off Bankside, within sight of the Globe Theatre; and doubtless he ferried Shakespeare—for he lived in his time—from Paris Garden to Whitehall more than once. This Water-poet had taken up his position in a spot where there were plenty of fares, which showed him to be possessed of an eye to the main chance; for Bankside was the landing-place to which citizens thronged in those days of Shakespearean glory. Besides, there were other places of amusement on the Bank side—the Rose and the Hope playhouses. With no bridge except Old London Bridge, and with Southwark, the chosen ground of summer theatres and 'bear-houses,' there is little wonder that John Taylor sang the praises of the river with all his heart and soul:

But noble Thames, whilst I can hold a pen,  
I will divulge thy glory unto men:  
Thou in the morning, when my coin is scant,  
Before the evening doth supply my want.

But at last the halcyon days of the Thames watermen came to an end. The nobility following in the footsteps of royalty, laid aside their gilded barges. Even the busy Inns of Court, whose practitioners and students had hitherto patronised the river for business and pleasure alike, took to the hackney-coach. The streets, as Taylor tells us,

Are choked outright,  
Where men can hardly pass, from morn till night,  
Whilst watermen want work.

The Water-poet then drops into prose, and goes forth to attack the coaches with great

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vehemence: he maintains that their swarm of 'trade-spillers'—as he styles them—have so overrun the land that there is no getting a living upon the water.

It must indeed have been a terrible blow, this irruption of coaches, for John Taylor and his fraternity; as terrible as the railway to the postmaster and postillion of a later age. But Taylor never lost heart, though coaches at last drove him off the river. He rented a tavern in Long Acre at the sign of the Poet's Head; and he supplied his own portrait with the following inscription:

There's many a head stands for a sign,  
Then, gentle Reader, why not mine?

Here, at the Poet's Head, he died in 1645, and was buried in the watermen's churchyard. This burial-ground stood on the south side of St Martin's-in-the-Field; and watermen were as ambitious to be placed here when they died, as any naval hero for a tomb in St Paul's.

The Thames, no longer the great highway, now became little more than a water conveyance, in the absence of bridges, between the City and the Borough. The Watermen's Company opposed the building of Westminster and Blackfriars Bridges as long as they could; but they were compelled to yield at last. And now even the ferrymen ceased to linger at the different Stairs, looking out hungrily for a chance 'fare.' It was a thing of the past. 'Boat, your honour! boat! boat!' was heard no more.

## THE MASTER CRAFTSMAN.\*

### CHAPTER VII.—THE CHURCHYARD.

I PASS over as irrelevant, or at least superfluous, the very disagreeable interview in which I revealed my plans to Frances. She had found a new opening for me—I was to be appointed Commissioner for Tobago, or President of Turk's Island, or Lieutenant-governor of the Gold Coast: she could obtain the post for me: it was an excellent opening: I was to spend two or three years in the endeavour to escape fever, and five or six years of sick leave at intervals. I should then have a clear claim to the gratitude of the Colonial Office and should be appointed Governor of some colony with a salary of many thousands. What more could any man desire?

Nothing, truly. And, as Frances observed, no creeping: no wriggling: no backstairs: also there is no examination for these appointments. And they are obtained in the good old way, by interest alone.

Why not, then, accept? Because, unfortunately, I was now a craftsman, and I really desired no other kind of life.

It was then that Frances spoke with conviction of demonic possession—I never before thought she believed in it—and of the extreme madness which sometimes seizes on men; and of the follies unspeakable which they commit. She was very angry—very angry indeed. She also declared her disgustful surprise at the bad, low, grovelling taste which made it possible for me to

leave the ranks of gentleness, and to go down—down—down—to live among beery, tobacco-smoking, ill-bred, uncultivated boors and bourgeois. She displayed on this subject quite an unexpected flow of language and command of adjectives. To be sure I had never seen her in a real rage before. And she looked very handsome indeed, marching about the room with flushed cheeks and angry eyes while she declaimed and denounced and lamented. I never admired her so much. She became so unexpected that I very nearly fell in love with her.

When she had quite finished by throwing such words as 'insensate,' 'clod,' and 'stock and stone' at my head, and by saying that she had now done with me for ever: and when she had flung herself into a chair and held her handkerchief to her eyes—I had never seen her cry before—and—indeed it was so unexpected that I very nearly, as I said before—and when I had said a few brotherly words and uttered a few assurances: and when we had shaken hands again—I kissed her hand if I remember aright—we sat down opposite to each other and close together, and had a pleasant talk quite in the old style, though it was understood that I was henceforth only a plain boat-builder.

It was then that I told her first about my cousin. She listened without much interest. The man was a mere tradesman.

'You want a recruit, Frances, for the Party? Of course you do. Well, then, I tell you that you could not do better than look after this man.'

'A man's a man, of course. Otherwise, George, the working-men members do not always turn out worth much. Still there are one or two—and—well—tell me more about this man.'

'He is not exactly a working-man. He is a master craftsman.'

'Oh!' She shrugged her shoulders impatiently. Such distinctions she knew not. And then I told her about his attainments and his boundless ambitions and everything, till at last I succeeded in making her believe that here really was a man who might be worth considering—the only fault which Frances then possessed was that she underrated the powers of everybody outside a certain circle. I told her about Robert at first, I believe, in order to divert her mind from the distressing spectacle of my decline and fall, and next in order to show her that we were not all beery boors and bourgeois at Wapping-on-the-Wall, and, lastly, it came into my head that if she should per adventure take an interest in his parliamentary career it might be very useful to him.

After a bit she began to understand a little. Her imagination was at last fired by the picture of this young man resolving, while yet a boy, on entering the House of Commons, and learning to speak at a sham Parliament, working at home on history, politics, social economy, all the questions of the day, reading Mill, Herbert, Spencer, Darwin, Huxley, Lecky, Froude, Freeman, Green, Seeley, and all the rest of them, becoming a learned man, denying himself the joys of youth, all for the sake of his ambition; and all the time remaining strong and masterful as one born to command. Because I am a dull person in narrative, or because

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she was prejudiced generally against trade, it was a long time before I succeeded in awakening her interest in the man. 'Do you know,' she said at last, 'that you seem to have got a very remarkable creature down there! Of course I cannot really believe that he will really come to anything. A man living all by himself, and ignorant of all the world outside his trade, cannot come to any good. In the House one must know men, not books only.'

'I wonder if you would like to hear him speak? He speaks every Sunday evening. If you like we will go.'

So it was arranged. Frances would like to see the kind of people who formed that constituency: she would like to hear the kind of speech that pleased them: she would go, subject to one condition, that she was not to see the boat-yard. 'I could not, George,' she said. 'It is bad enough that you should descend into that horrid place—when you might become Colonial Governor. I could not actually see the chips and shavings. Oh! George, you are very wilful—but I must always forgive you. Yes, I will go with you to see this wonderful person of Wapping. You only try to excuse your abominable alacrity in sinking by pretending that you have got a Prophet down there.'

So I came away forgiven and reconciled, but for ever fallen in her esteem, and I returned to my river-side work with greater heart now that the worst was over.

It was natural that one should take an interest in the people of the place—especially in the people of the house. I spent every day an hour—the dinner hour—with Robert's household. Sometimes, too, another half-hour over a cup of tea. Therefore, of course, one thought a good deal about the people. The captain I found an honest, hearty old fellow who liked his meals, took a cheerful glass after his dinner and supper, and slept away most of the remaining time. He had a room at the back called the captain's cabin, where there was a narrow bed and an easy-chair; a hob with a kettle; a table with a tobacco-jar, and other conveniences. There I sometimes visited him and heard experiences.

But the person of real interest was Isabel. I thought her, at first, inanimate and perhaps stupid. I discovered first, that she had a very beautiful head—the poets do not seem to understand the charm of a well-shaped head—but it was nearly always drooping. Then I observed that her hair was quite wonderful—there was such a lot of it, and it was of such a lovely light colour, looking as if it held the sunshine even in that dark 'parlour'—it was, however, only rolled up without any coquettish display—was the girl quite ignorant of her charms? Her eyes were generally down, dropped as in shyness or humility—once she lifted them with some strange wonder because I made some frivolous remark—there was never any frivolity about this house before I went into it; why, they were large and limpid, of a deep blue, like the dark blue of a pansy. And then I discovered that her features were straight and regular, and that though her cheek was pale, and her manner was listless and drooping, the girl was full of beauty in face and head and figure. And Robert, like a thing of wood, had

no eyes for the loveliness that was his by engagement! Wonderful!

I could not, at first, get the girl to talk to me. She sat at table, carving in silence, or pouring out the tea in silence. When it was over, she spread out her books and began to work again. And week after week passed by; I was an old shipmate with the captain; I was on the most confidential terms, as you have seen, with Robert. But Isabel remained a stranger.

Then the opportunity came.

It was a Saturday afternoon. I had been spending an hour after dinner talking with the captain in his den. Then, as he showed signs of going to sleep, I left him, and bent my steps westward. It was a bright, sunny afternoon in May. The street was deserted; the warehouses were shut up; the sunshine increased, and set off, the dreariness of the tall places on either side.

I came to the mouth of the dock. As once before, the gates were open for the passing of a ship, and I had to wait. I leaned against the rail and watched. On the right was the dock, with the masts of the ships; on the left was the river. I looked at the river and looked at the dock. Then I became aware of a most unexpected fact—on the right hand, besides the dock, there were trees—green trees! 'Anything green in Wapping?' I asked. 'Trees and green leaves. Do they grow out of the water?'

I then perceived that there was a street leading north—I thought that there was nothing north of the High Street except the dock.

At the corner was a substantial modern house, the vestry house of the parish, with its brass plate and clean windows. Next, I observed a lovely eighteenth-century house—sober, square, built of red brick, having an ample portal, and in the wall two effigies of boy and girl. This was the parish school. The figures looked more demure than one could believe possible in human boy and human girl. And then I came to the church, a plain and unaffected preaching house of brick, with pillars and portico of stone; beside it on the south side was a narrow churchyard, adorned with old tombstones, headstones and altar stones, the sepulchres of bygone captains, past owners, sailors, and boat-builders. I observed with some pride the name of Burnikel on one of them, the nearest to the street—my ancestor. Perhaps all the important tombs belonged to Burnikels, if I could only climb over the rails to see. The church was shut, yet it might have been more useful in the week when Wapping is full than on the Sunday when Wapping is empty. Had it been open, I might have gratified my family pride still more by observing the tablets and reading of the incomparable virtues of other Burnikels belonging to this fine old stock. There was part of the churchyard on the north side; its houses had been recently cleared away and the space turned into a recreation ground. So liberal was the County Council that they swept away half the remnant of Wapping that had been spared by the docks, and now there are not enough people left in the town to populate the recreation ground. Children were recreating in it, however, and there was a gymnasium for



them in one corner, and a stand for the summer band in another corner. A picturesque row of 'backs' showed the character of the streets that had been cleared away.

I noted these things. I observed also that there were still remaining, beyond the recreation ground, other streets of small houses—not beautiful, not clean, perhaps squalid, if one were inclined to harshness—and beyond these streets tall masts which told of another dock. Wapping, then, did not, as I had fondly imagined, consist of one street only with a river on one side and docks on the other, and no living person in it at night except the Burnikels. Wapping is a collection of human beings; it is a hamlet, a township, a town complete.

Here was the parish church, here were the endowed schools, here was the vestry hall, here was the playground. I turned back, and then—a thing which I had passed over before—I perceived before me, fenced round, a peaceful, beautiful burying-ground, lying opposite the parish church on the other side of the road. A more peaceful spot one would not expect in the most secluded village. It was filled with tombs and headstones; it was planted with a thick coppice of limes, lilacs, laburnums, and all kinds of flowering trees and shrubs growing among the tombs. I looked through the bars. Wapping, then, had this one garden left, and since the greater part of Wapping was dead and gone, buried deep below the docks, a churchyard seemed the fittest place in which to maintain a garden. Wherever industries spread, and trade increases, we find the past beside the present. In the midst of the noise and hurry of Manchester there stands the ancient college; in the midst of Hull rises the ancient church; in the midst of the smoke and grime of Newcastle there is its ancient fortress; and beside the modern docks of Wapping stands the old church with its burying-ground and its schools. Let me never live where there is nothing ancient, nothing to connect me with my forefathers, nothing to remind me of death, nothing to preach to me on the continuous life in which the living are but links, and the past is neither lost nor forgotten.

The gate was unlocked. I gently pushed it open and stepped within, reverently, yet with the sense of ownership. Why not? Before me stood a headstone—the name had been recently cleaned and restored—'Sacred to the memory of John Burnikel, Master Mariner, died March 16, 1808, aged ninety-four years.' That must have been the man with the diamonds. I stooped down and pushed aside the grass to read the text with which his pious cousins had decorated the tomb. 'Of whom the world was not worthy' I read. Astonishing! Of whom the world was not worthy! This must have been written while they still expected to find the diamonds. Then I plunged, so to speak, into the recesses of this coppice. And there I found, to my amazement, sitting on a tomb with folded hands, and hanging head, in an attitude of the most profound dejection, the girl Isabel.

She lifted her head when she heard my step. She had been crying; the tears, like dewdrops, lay still upon her cheeks.

'You here, Isabel?' I cried. 'What are you doing in the place of tombs?'

'I am sitting here.' But she rose as if she was tired of sitting there and should now go home.

'Yes, I see. But'—

'It is a pretty place. There are not too many pretty places in Wapping.'

'No. Do you often come here?'

'In spring and summer, sometimes, when I can get away. On Saturday afternoons. It is quiet. Nobody else ever comes. I have it all to myself.'

'Why are you crying, Isabel? Don't cry. It makes me miserable to see a girl crying. Are you unhappy?'

She turned away her head and made no reply.

'Sit down again where you were, Isabel. It is a pretty place. The lilacs are bursting into blossom and the laburnums are beginning. It is a very pretty place. The dead sleep well and the living you do not see. Can you tell me, Isabel, why you are unhappy?'

She shook her head, but she obeyed in sitting down again.

'Of course I have seen all along that you are not happy. You work too hard for one thing. Is it the work?'

'Oh no!—no!—no! I must do what Robert tells me to do.'

'You are too much confined to the house. Is it the want of change?'

'No, no. I want no change. I do what I have to do.'

'You will not tell me.'

'I cannot.'

'Of course I have no right to ask. Still, I am Robert's cousin, and I see you every day, and you can't wonder if I take an interest in you. Will you be offended if I speak just a little of my mind?'

'I offended? Does that matter?' A strange thing for a girl to say, as if she was of no importance at all; as if surprised that any one should regard her at all.

'Well, Isabel, in that part of the world where I have chiefly lived the girls are treated with consideration: they are princesses: they are filled with the consciousness of their own power: their words are received with respect and their wishes are studied. It matters very much indeed whether one offends them or not. So I hope not to offend your ladyship.'

'You will not offend me.'

'Well, then. Listen. You work too hard; you get no society; you have no change; you take too little exercise; you are growing nervous and shy; you shrink from seeing people.'

'I live the life that is assigned to me.'

'You are so young, Isabel, that you ought to sing in the house; you ought to walk as if you had wings; you ought to laugh all day; you ought to rebel and revolt and mutiny'—

She did laugh, but not with merriment.

'All these things belong to your age and your sex and—your beauty.'

'My beauty!' she repeated, with a kind of wonder. 'My beauty! Oh no! You must not talk nonsense.'

'Your beauty. You should be a very beauti-

ful girl if the cloud would lift. Come now. May I lift that cloud for you? May I try, at least?'

I held out my hand. She hesitated a moment. Then she gave me her own timidly.

I did not suspect the real cause of her unhappiness. I did, however, feel a most profound pity for a young girl who could find no better amusement than to sit among the tombs on a fine afternoon in spring. Even those who are nearing the time when they will be put to lie there do not generally like to sit among them.

'You will tell me some other time,' I said, 'why you are so sad. Meantime, let me be your friend; and, look here, Isabel, I am a great physician. You must believe that I have cured countless cases of Languishing Lady and Doleful Damsel. I am thousands of years old, although I am apparently only five-and-twenty; that is because I am such a great physician. Well, at this nonsense she actually smiled. 'And now, I will prescribe for you. Not so much work; not so much house; not so much monotony.'

'The work has to be done.'

'Robert is so busy himself that he does not observe. I shall speak to him.'

'Oh! But what he says'—

'Yes, yes, I know. I will speak to him. Now, come with me. I will take you out upon the river. That will do you more good than sitting among the tombs—even the tombs of the Burnikels.'

There are still boats and 'first oars' at Wapping Old Stairs. In five minutes I was sitting beside her in the stern of a wherry—Burnikel built—with a couple of stout fellows pulling us down stream. And I brought her back with colour in her cheeks and brightness in her eyes. 'My medicine works already,' I said. 'Robert will say that I have done wonders.'

Alas! Robert observed no change at all; and during the half-hour of tea the poor girl sat as usual with hanging head and down-dropped eyes. But it was a beginning.

(To be continued.)

### TRANSVAAL PRISONS FROM THE INSIDE.

WHEN knocking about South Africa lately, in a wild mood, heart three-quarters broken, I had occasion to use a couple of times Paul Kruger's prison-houses of detention as hotels, and this is what I saw and thought. Anyhow, come, please, with me kindly to Johannesburg jail, the largest and most important in Africa. It is an enormous solid mass of buildings of huge blocks of stone with iron roofing, and looks down on its own pet city from the most commanding of the hills around—namely, Hospital Hill. Rome's glory was reflected by her similarly situated capitol: and now, by a *fin de siècle* chance replica, the innate genius of Johannesburg is embodied in her palace-jail. For Johannesburgers, it is slyly hinted by those who have met

them in business or otherwise, are composed of three classes—namely, (1) those who have been in jail; (2) those who are now in; (3) those who still have to go there; but have been up to now fortunate enough to escape.

On entering the jail, you are—or are not, according to Boer caprice—supplied with its home necessities authorised by law. Anyhow you are entitled to a plate, mug, and spoon, all of tin, a towel, a bit of soap once a fortnight, and, if lucky, a tin bucket, which you can keep clean for drinking water; also three rugs for bed-clothes, and if your cell happens to have a stone floor, a straw mattress, if you can get one. Half a pound of mealie-meal, boiled to a 'pap,' served at daybreak, and ditto at night, and at mid-day one pound loaf of bread and one pound of rough meat, which can be exchanged for Transvaal tobacco with the Kaffir prisoners. Now you have a regular and simple life which will put that of any ordinary hydrophobic to the blush, if only the patient can stand it.

Here comes S—, bright and whistling, an Austrian of thirty, vain of his good looks and earrings, who at Fiume stabbed a fellow-countryman to death in a row for badly beating his mate. Only the night before the execution should have taken place, he learnt that he was reprieved, and a life's imprisonment substituted. From seven years of age, when he ran away from his father to escape a thrashing, he wandered the world in independence; and after many coasting experiences in the Mediterranean, and long voyages to the Americas and England, at all of which places he was in a chronic state of deserting his ship, he found himself ashore at Capetown. Seal-hunting, diamond-digging, bar-keeping, mining, contracting for work on railways with gangs of blacks (who could in the earlier days be shot like dogs, buried in the railway-track, and no questions asked), he has now become the leading pillar in the jail Salvation Army meetings, where he reads the Bible in broken English, and leads in loud notes the hymns he has chosen, chorused to by all the Kaffir prisoners, who sing the tune only, and do not know the words. The stabbing affrays he has been mixed up in are too numerous to recall, but his forte is lying on his back on his bed, or in the sun, telling and inventing highly graphic and poetical children's stories to a knot of prisoners. He is doctor's orderly, giving out medicines and being held responsible for the cleanliness of the jail, whereby he escapes hard labour, and finds time to make and dispose of canvas water-bottles in exchange for tea, sugar, tobacco, and little luxuries. In the present unsettled state of politics he may be at large again soon, for no one knows when or on what system prisoners are released, or will be.

Henry S—, Dutch on the mother's side, but son of an English father, is a typical Dutch free-

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booter. He is a trader, with ox-wagons and calicoes, boots, guns, &c., knowing the country—roads and routes—from Natal to Namaqualand; and has lost every trace of the Englishman, save a knowledge of the English language, and good animal courage, which, combined with Dutch cunning, has made him a formidable desperado. Wherever he went, cattle disappeared, and, as attendant Kaffirs died or disappeared as a rule very suddenly, and were replaced by others, none but himself knew exactly how his flocks and herds increased. Being paid by farmers and Kaffirs mainly in cattle, he formed centres at which to collect them, and made it worth while for smart natives to steal others. He was once surprised in the act of hanging one of his boys to a high projection of his wagon, but as he explained that he was only tying him up to prevent his running away, the Dutch police did not press the question further. A very powerful, thick-set, black-bearded man; he helped to steal hundreds of cattle—principally looted beasts belonging to the expedition—in the Malaboch and kindred campaigns. He fought for England in the Zulu war, against her in the Boer war, and has been in nearly every South African affair of note, except the Matabele, fighting always with the irregulars, and from behind cover.

Here he is at last in jail for stealing a miserable cow only worth a pound or two; and his black boy, who stole it for him, and on whose evidence S— was convicted, lies in the same jail suffering for another offence. He now waits on his old master in jail, and will undoubtedly, poor fool, go back instinctively to him when released. The prison warders and Dutch police are S—'s best friends; he is not made to work, or only as much as he likes, and receives presents from the easy-going, rough, and ignorant officials, who look upon him as a safe rifle-shot, and a safe Dutchman.

We had Lord Randolph Churchill's cook—in with him in his South African tour—in for stealing a bicycle. He told quaint stories of Lord Randolph's detestation of Dutch names and Dutch Boers. 'Oh Lord!' he gasped convulsively, when paying a formal call on a local landroest, as, on driving up, the huge unkempt head of the 'vrouw' was poked out of the front-door on the stoep, or cemented veranda, to know who wanted her Goodman, as she struggled into her typical old calico dress; and his lordship right-abouted his horses, returning to camp quicker than he came.

There sits in heavy irons a Belgian of middle age, and in figure best described as a block four feet six inches square, one of the most desperate robbers and jovial rascals in the country. He is ironed, as the Dutchmen cannot otherwise prevent his trying to escape, except by keeping him constantly locked up. His last escape was in full mounted-policeman's uniform and on horseback, with revolver drawn and cocked, right through the other prisoners and guards, and laughing at them. He had his things left for him by some friend near where the gang was marched to work, his horse tethered behind a hillock, obtained a

couple of minutes' excuse, changed his clothes, and was off: and was not recaptured till the next offence. Then he nearly shook the teeth out of his jailer, who had run up and shaken him first on hearing him demur at obeying some order of a warder. The prisoner's objection from the dock to his jailer's giving evidence of the assault on the ground that he was already a forsworn man, having broken the oath he took to Queen Victoria when he deserted to the Boers, was comically pathetic.

Then comes young —, the scion of a well-known gang of bushrangers, who some years ago stuck up several Australian banks. Young, handsome, with fair moustache, he is not allowed by the prison authorities to go out to work at all as they fear his escaping, and confine him to jail, frequently changing him from one jail to another. Twice, returning from his trial at the court-house, he was nearly off: once jumping out of a cab, wherein he sat handcuffed to a brother-offender, having opened the handcuffs with a piece of string; when just out-distancing the police he was upset by an officious civilian, and retaken. His pal stepped coolly from the cab, the police being in pursuit of Kelly, walked slowly through the crowd, and was never heard of more. Another time, in an organised stampede of the prisoners near the railway station, he escaped the police revolver bullets, and being too drunk to steer properly, tripped up over some loose wires and could not rise again before being retaken. He had entered the Standard Bank well dressed, with an accomplice carrying a bag an exact copy of one then lying on the bank counter, in which the balance due between that bank and another was carried across the street in gold, notes, &c., by a messenger on fixed dates. The time for closing was at hand, few were about, and the bank official was accosted by 'Hullo, Brown, my dear old fellow, how are you? &c. What? You don't know me? Impossible! &c. Why, we lodged together in the same rooms for six weeks in Port Elizabeth. If I don't know you, I don't know myself, &c.' The official is embarrassed, his attention distracted, mutual explanations and mutual regrets follow, the bags are exchanged, the valuable one has gone, and some time elapses before at the neighbouring bank the bag substituted for it is found to contain, not gold and notes, but bits of old lead, old iron, old newspapers. Some thousands were taken, some £900 were found on —, a curious question subsequently arising as to whether it belonged to the bank, or whether —'s counsel had a right to be paid out of it, he being, of course, employed previous to the conviction which proved to whom the money belonged.

— had commenced bribing the officials in jail before attempting to escape, and had cabs in his pay nightly waiting for him outside the jail. A good deal of money was smuggled through to him, including, I am sorry to say, a great many shillings gold-coated to pass as sovereigns. He was transferred to another jail for better security, but has, no doubt, ere now escaped.

A cell is usually occupied by four whites or twenty blacks, the latter reposing much like

sardines. Flogging, one can see, is necessary to keep Kaffirs in order, but, poor souls, such lashings as they at times get at the hands of the Dutch are simply hideous. Some Kaffirs, long-time men, told us through the bars separating 'white' from 'black' yards, that two had lately died after such flogging, and one recently operated on was believed to be dying whilst they were talking to us. The blacks are placed against a sort of leaning ladder, their arms stretched up, and their wrists and ankles firmly strapped. It is wonderful how callous one Kafir is to another Kafir's suffering. The doctor is bound to be present. He of Johannesburg has black blood in his veins. He got the post for services rendered in the Boer war against the English, as did the majority of those now in Transvaal Government pay.

That man is one of three who went up to a farmer who was driving a valuable lot of sheep, who had outspanned with his Kaffirs and was at dinner. They asked him for something, shot him first, then shot his Kaffirs, threw the bodies into a disused mine-shaft, burnt the wagon and drove off the oxen and sheep. Some casual traveller stumbling on the shaft, the murders stood revealed, and an attempt to dispose of some of the sheep on which a distinctive brand had not been properly obliterated, led to the arrest and conviction of two of them. A very clever defence placed the chief guilt on the third, who escaped.

The couple of burglars talking yonder are 'in' for a quick job. When they had got entrance through the window of a jeweller's shop from the street, a charge of dynamite had been poked in through the keyhole of the safe, the fuse was exploded, the front-door of the safe blown out, and all its contents, watches, chains, stones, rings, &c. swept anyhow into a couple of large bags; and they were off before any who heard the noise had recovered from the shock, or had presence of mind to appear upon the scene. They were afterwards split upon by a pawnbroker, and convicted. The jailer at Klerksdorp is a tiny Dutchman of Portuguese extraction, and small and fat as Portuguese are generally made. He looked very funny when I first saw him, ordering his motley myrmidons to put a huge English soldier-deserter into the stocks for laughing at and not saluting him. I do not think they ever got the 'ryneck' there, for they were falling thick as autumn leaves when I last looked back. 'Ryneck,' or 'red neck,' with adjective prefixed, is the Dutchman's epithet for the Englishman, since he saw the red-coats in the Boer war. Neither this Dutch jailer nor any of his staff are of a literary turn. I have seen him tear up half-a-dozen attempts, and take half an hour to address an envelope. Consequently his official jail returns could not be made to his government at all, did not the jail nearly always contain amongst its prisoners some one able to write Dutch fairly. In return the scribe is excused from his hard labour.

Prisoners of good conduct are allowed to send one letter, and receive one every month, to be read *en route* by the jailer. This little man will promise to post for you, but the more important the letter the greater is the

relish of the joke against the Uitlander in not posting it. To complain of a Dutch official to his Dutch superior is mere waste of breath.

Dick is a fine, well-shaped, handsome Basuto. He assisted some others in a burglary, and escaping with some bed-clothes and trifles, found when on the veldt that there was a white baby amongst the blankets. It was left where found in a bed-sheet, and survived; a blanket being 'too much worth' to leave for the baby, said Dick, with a grin. 'Sixpence,' 'Ketchie,' 'Loben,' 'Shilling,' 'Ticky,' very funny names the Kaffirs have, every second one being a 'Jan' or 'John.' The Kafir yard is similar to, but separate from, the white man's yard. The Kaffirs are fed alternately on mealie pap or the Indian corn boiled whole, and one pound of meat twice a week. For meat they would barter their souls, and you can for a bit of abominable meat always get from them a bit of Transvaal tobacco of the same size, and good too. The ordinary Dutch warder is too brutal and stupid to require description; he only says No! to any request, and when he is not eating his dinner out of an old basin, spends his time half dozing, and, Kafir guards loving rest also, escapes are frequent. Here is a Scotchman under whose special tutelage I lost whatever valuable personal property I took in. A clean-shaved, clean, smart little gray man of sixty, after years of tramping in absolute want, promoted from driving a baker's cart, he has just married and commenced life as a teetotaler and warder, having at last found an opening in life for the first time. He is already high in command, knowing how to get on. Speak or whistle and you are in the stocks, and no appeal; resist, and you will get three months more, possibly in irons, and twenty-five lashes; so your Uitlander does his thinking to himself. As regards taking prisoners' property, I have no hesitation in saying that the Dutch police are amongst the biggest thieves in Johannesburg; and this, after making full allowance for much exaggeration and falsehood which may be expected from prisoners' own accounts. Quite recently, after a large fire at certain grocery stores, a huge amount of groceries of all sorts were stolen and traced to the stations and houses of the fire-brigade and police, the latter being in charge of the burning buildings, keeping the crowd out, and helping themselves lavishly. Again, the head warder of the jail, a huge Dutchman, was sentenced the other day to some small inadequate punishment for stealing many hundred pounds' worth of money and property from prisoners in the course of a year or two. It is easy enough to take the money of a prisoner who is inside, safe for a long term of years—some are arrested with very large sums on their persons—and also in cases where the prisoner is too drunk to remember what he ought to have had with him when arrested.

Jovial tramps—'on the wallaby' is the classical term in South Africa—these there always are, mostly Irish, who put in their winters in jail, and in summer beg and steal their way for hundreds of miles, working a little here and there at the farms they pass, but, poor

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fellows, knowing no trade, and happy with a blanket, some mealie-meal, and a 'billy' for cooking or drinking water. They are worse off than Kaffirs, who know roots and fruits good to eat on the veldt as they pass. Reckless, broken-down gentlemen, too, are not infrequent, and may be met scores of miles from any house, striding on in a few rags, two-thirds of a pair of boots, and a 'Hallo, comrade, whither away?' to any one they meet in similar case. Desperate and successful criminals these make when they get into congenial society, or capital fighters in any small native war, should occasion arise. The Kaffirs are daily arrested by scores for being in town without a proper pass, or written authority, good for a month, value one shilling. Now the blacks cannot read, and the Zaps themselves (ZARP, on their tunic, stands for South African Republic Police) in many cases can make only a very poor attempt at it; so as the revenue accruing from the fines is very great, and the black prison labour from those who cannot pay is very valuable, it can be imagined that the poor Kaffir has a bad time. Complaints are frequent of the sapient Zaps trying to read passes upside down, tearing and throwing away valid passes and swearing the bearer had none (for a Kaffir's word is taken as nothing against a policeman's), &c. Your Dutch policeman is simply a raw illiterate Boer taken from a backward farm, scarcely able to read and write his mother-tongue, and speaking usually just a smattering of English. He is drilled a little in a backyard, and placed on beat duty, but his knowledge of police duties is 'nil,' and miserably paid; and he is constantly striking to get pay which has been long since due to him from his lethargic superiors, a curious anomaly altogether in an up-to-date English-speaking city like Johannesburg. A few Englishmen, however, have been taken into the detective department, by whom all the important duty in the repression of crime is done.

The jail at Pretoria cannot be better described than as being a smaller edition of the one at Johannesburg. Black and white men's yards lie to the right and left, and a small separate yard is kept for the untried prisoners—white and Kaffir—who are not sent out to work before convicted, whites and Kaffirs merely occupying separate cells, and the white men keeping the blacks to their own allotted corner in the yard itself. Hither came Dr Jameson and his comrades ('Dr Jim' in South African parlance from Cape to Zambesi) after their one hundred and fifty mile hand-gallop dart for Johannesburg; thither, too, came the Johannesburgers who were subsequently imprisoned. The cells are some eighteen feet by twelve feet, and stone-flagged—three prison blankets for a covering, and one for a pillow: the régime in every other respect the same as at Johannesburg. To do the Boers justice, they allow untried prisoners to have in what they want and can pay for, if they can also pay them for passing it in. For a sovereign or less, had they not been political prisoners, admission could have been procured for anything in the world, provided it were not too large to go through the prison doors.

Pretoria itself is a pretty town with graceful

houses and gardens and good public buildings; its most striking feature is fine old fir and other avenues of trees, some seventy or eighty feet high, and fine broad roads.

## VANISHED!

By J. S. FLETCHER.

### I.

I HAD worked hard at my art for years without more recognition than artists get from publishers or editors who want designs for title-pages and book illustrations, and more than once I had felt half tempted to throw the whole thing aside and emigrate, or enlist, or do something that would have been equally foolish. But the thought of Helen Tresham had kept me going, and had made me brave when my own natural inclination would have led me to mere cowardice. While I was working in London she was toiling away at her governess work in St Petersburg, saving all that she could towards the home which we had set our minds upon making in England. At that time she used to write me the most cheery of letters—always bidding me hope and trust—the kind, sympathetic, helping sort of letters that good women do write to the men they love. Sometimes she used to blame herself for living in such luxury as she did (she was governess to the family of a Russian prince who lived in a palace), while I was slaving away in dreary London chambers. But then she would naively add, her salary was so good that she could save a great deal of money out of it, and every pound saved brought nearer the happy time. After I read one of her letters, I used to work feverishly, for I wanted her to come back to me, and I had made up my mind that I would never ask her to do that until I felt sure of success.

At last—what a long time it had been, and yet how quickly we forgot it when it was once over!—the time of waiting came to an end and our happiness began. At last my success was assured, and the people who had flouted or scorned me began to speak of me respectfully as a rising artist. There was no more need to execute pot-boilers—nay, there was no longer necessity to work more like a slave than a man. Success became a certainty—it was no longer a matter of speculation, but rather a question of degree. I had both feet firmly planted on the ladder—the only problem now was how far I should climb towards the top. And so Helen and I were married and settled down in a South Kensington flat, I to work at my art, and she to direct, counsel, and inspire—all of which womanly duties came to her with natural lavishness. What children we were in those first happy days, and what a paradise our small establishment seemed to our eyes, blinded by love's roseate tints! I think we played at life for the first few weeks, but

after that we woke up to realise that life is a matter of variety, and so came sober reflection and steady work in its train. It was at that period of my career that I painted my picture of the balcony scene in 'Romeo and Juliet.' Helen sat to me for Juliet—I had never seen a woman's face that so adequately realised my own conception of Shakespeare's girl-heroine. I selected the moment when Juliet bends from the balcony to tell Romeo why she would have back her love:

But to be frank and give it thee again,  
And yet I wish but for the thing I have;  
My bounty is as boundless as the sea,  
My love as deep; the more I give to thee  
The more I have!

There were people who objected to my picture when it was finished because Romeo's face was not seen. He stood with his back to the foreground, showing no more than the contour of an olive-tinted cheek. But there was design in that, for I wanted Juliet's face to dominate and light the whole picture, even as its original had lighted my own life. So, though it was entitled 'Romeo and Juliet,' it was really Juliet and no more. I had never a doubt of its success. It seemed to me, as I worked at it with Helen's face bending towards me from the improvised balcony which I had built up in my studio, that the people would crowd about it and wonder, and at last understand and go away pleased. And so it was no surprise to me, when the hanging committee of the Royal Academy gave the picture a place on the line, and the first visitors began to crowd round it with eyes and voices expressive of admiration.

Had that picture never been painted, it is possible that Helen and I had escaped a long year of sickening anguish.

I was strolling through the rooms of the Royal Academy one afternoon, some weeks after the exhibition opened, and went round to my own picture with a vague curiosity to see whether people still clustered about it. It had been so popular that the authorities had placed a policeman before it, and on this particular afternoon he stood there looking intensely bored, for there was absolutely nothing to occupy him. Only one person stood before the picture—a man, evidently a foreigner, clad in garments that were presentable and no more. It was, I think, his evident poverty that first attracted me to the man, but presently my interest transferred itself from his general appearance to the look in his eyes. He stood a little distance away from the picture, his arms folded over his tightly buttoned frock-coat, his whole body rigid and motionless, his eyes concentrated on Juliet's face. They were strange eyes—wild, fiery, keen—and just then they seemed to fasten themselves on the picture with a devouring interest.

The policeman on duty knew me, and saluted me with respect as a man who could make people feel an interest in mere pictures. I nodded and passed on. At the door of the room I turned and looked back. The man with the strange eyes was talking to the policeman, and just as I glanced at them I saw the officer nod his head in my direction. The stranger turned and looked at me, and it

seemed to me that our eyes met across the long room. I caught, at any rate, a peculiar glitter from them; then I turned away and professed to be intent on a picture close by. When I looked round again the man had gone—there was no one in the room but the policeman and myself. I sauntered round the room again, and stopped near my own picture. The policeman was looking at something which he held in his hand. He glanced at me and saluted me confidentially—almost appealingly. 'Beg pardon, sir,' he said, 'but what might this here be? It's money o' some sort, but I don't know what 'tis. That foreign cove that's just gone out dropped it into my hand as he went—I reckon it's not worth much—looks like a bit o' dirty brass.'

I took the coin in my hand and examined it carefully. It was dirty, and a little worn, but it was a Russian imperial rouble for all that. 'That's a very nice tip, my man,' said I, handing the coin back. 'It's a Russian gold coin, and its English value is about thirty-two shillings.'

The policeman turned more colours than one. He stared from the coin to me, and from me to the coin.

'It must ha' been a mistake,' he gasped. 'And yet—why, he took out a reg'lar handful of 'em, and just picked that out as if 'twas a penny!'

'I suppose the man thought he was only rewarding you in accordance with your deserts,' I said.

'Lor!' he answered. 'I told him next to nothing, sir. Just the artist's name, and as you were in the gallery I pointed you out—no offence, I hope, sir?—it's the usual thing. But thirty-two shillings—you ain't mistaken, sir? And 'im dressed like a pauper!'

I observed, with the air of one uttering an absolutely original remark, that one cannot always judge by appearances; and having advised the policeman to take his imperial rouble to a money-changer, passed on and went home. I believe I had dismissed the whole incident from my mind before I reached the end of Piccadilly—certainly I had forgotten it by the time I reached home, for I made no mention of it to Helen. I often wondered in the days that came after and brought so much anxiety in their train, if anything of our sorrow would have been avoided if I had told her. But the thing seemed slight and inconsequential—an odd-looking foreigner staring at my picture and giving its custodian a gold rouble—there was nothing in that to suggest the first step in an ugly dream—and so I let the incident pass unheeded.

## II.

It was about a month later that Helen came to me one afternoon dressed for walking, and asked if I would go out with her for a while. I was busy at my easel, for the light was good and I was absorbed in a new conception. I looked at her, and wanted to go, and then at my picture, and wanted to stop. She saw my hesitation and retreated, laughing, to the door.

'Oh, irresolute lover!' she said. 'Is it so

hard to make up your mind as to the charms of your two mistresses? Never mind, dear, I'll give place to art for an hour. I have some shopping to do, and you hate shopping, don't you, poor darling? Go on with your work and be ready for my return in an hour, and then we'll have a walk in the park before darkness comes on. *So au revoir!*

She threw me a kiss with her dainty fingertips and laughed and ran away. I heard the door close and the patter of her feet upon the stairs outside, and then I turned to my picture and worked steadily again.

An hour passed and still I worked and Helen had not returned. At the end of another half-hour I laid aside palette and brushes and made myself ready for our walk. Still she came not. I sat down and smoked, but at the end of two hours I went downstairs, and standing at the door of our house looked along the road hoping to catch sight of her advancing figure. Once I thought that I saw her in the distance, and I went to meet her only to find myself mistaken. I went back to the house and waited a while at the door. Ten minutes passed and there was no sign of her coming. I went up-stairs to our rooms and sat down to smoke in my studio. It was then nearly three hours since she had left me, and the afternoon was rapidly fading into twilight. Still I did not feel uneasy; it struck me that she had met some friend or other and made a call. She knew that I was busily intent on my picture and should not object to being left alone with it. So I sat there smoking and reading, expectant of her voice on the stairs at any moment. I had no thought whatever of wrong—how could I have?

I think I had worked longer and harder that day than usual—anyhow, something induced me to sleep. The book which I was reading dropped from my hand and I slumbered. While I slept I dreamed that Helen was in danger. I heard her voice crying to me for help. I had a momentary glimpse of her face, full of pain and fear. I woke with a start and looked about me. The studio was in darkness, there was no gleam of light save the faint rays of a gas lamp in the street outside. Something seemed to suggest coming sorrow and trouble: the air felt charged with it. I struck a match and lighted the gas, and at that moment the door opened to admit the parlour-maid, carrying my reading-lamp. I wanted to ask her if Helen had returned, and could find no words to do so. She set down the lamp and looked at me.

'My mistress has not come in yet, sir,' she said. 'Will you dine?—cook says that dinner will be spoiled—it's nearly seven o'clock, sir.'

Our usual dinner-hour was six, a convenient one for us because it was neither too early nor too late. I glanced at my watch; it was five minutes to seven. Where could Helen be? It was nearly four hours since she left home, and wherever she might have gone I felt sure that had all been well she would have returned to dinner. Then I remembered with a sickening sense of fear that we had promised to accompany some friends to the theatre that evening,

and had arranged to call for them at a quarter to eight. Even as I remembered that, a ray of hope flashed upon me: it might be that Helen had gone there. It was an improbable thing, but drowning men catch at straws, and I was by that time most seriously concerned at my wife's absence. I told the girl to keep dinner waiting, and snatching up my hat ran out to our friend's house. One word there sent me away again; Helen had not been there. But as I turned away a voice called me back: one of the daughters of the house had seen her at half-past three in Piccadilly. She was just going into Hatchard's book-shop, and had stayed a moment at the door to speak to her friend and to confirm our engagement for the evening.

There are, I think, few sensations more horrible than that of a man who loses wife or child in a great city and feels himself hopelessly at sea at the very outset of his search. I realised this sensation to the full as I walked away from my friend's house. I was by that time certain that something had befallen Helen. She might at that moment be calling on me for help as she did in my dream. And yet I was helpless, powerless. Which way should I turn amidst that awful labyrinth of streets? She had been more easy to find in the desert of Sahara than in that vast city.

I went home hoping to find her there. I looked into the dining-room. There was the cheery table spread for dinner with its two vacant places, and the shaded lamp-light falling on the polished glass and silver. But the room was empty, and so was the whole house, empty, at any rate, of her presence. I roamed from room to room for a while, too full of a sickening fear to think or speculate, but at last I could bear the suspense no longer. I left the house and drove to the nearest police-station and gave information.

There is a certain monotonous regularity about the ways and doings and thoughts of our police which is exasperating at times like that of which I am writing, but in spite of it their help is valuable, and it gave me some further hope to see how promptly their intricate machinery was put in motion. Perhaps I chafed somewhat under the cold, official questions of the inspector. He was full of motive and cause, I was concerned only with result and effect. I laughed when he asked me if there were any reason why my wife should leave her home, but I answered all his interrogations calmly, only begging him when they were finished to use his best endeavours as rapidly as possible.

I shall not relate in detail the history of the next twenty-four hours. My wife did not return. We found that after leaving home she had walked to Piccadilly and had purchased two new books at Hatchard's. After that there was no trace of her. But later in the day the police took me to a lonely spot in Kensington Gardens where they had discovered traces of a struggle. The wheel of a conveyance had impinged on the grass, and near it were the marks of feet. Close by lay a parcel in brown paper which proved to contain the two books purchased by Helen at Hatchard's. It turned

my heart to ice when I saw those books, for their discovery seemed to suggest a tragedy. But there was worse in store.

'Here's something else,' said an inspector. 'It lay close by the books, but whether it has anything to do with the case or not I don't know. Look at it.'

He held up a *carte-de-visite* portrait as he spoke. I snatched it from him—merciful heavens! It was a photograph of the man whom I had found gazing at my picture in the academy!

### III.

A year passed by. It seemed like a century to me, for as the long days lengthened into longer weeks they brought me no news of Helen. I had spared no time and had spent every available penny in my efforts to trace her, but without result. She had vanished as completely as though something had snatched her away from earth. The ordinary methods of the police were absolutely futile, they resulted in mere nothingness. After a time I discarded them and turned inquiry-agent on my own account. It seemed to me that the clue to the mystery of Helen's disappearance lay in the strange man who had shown so keen an interest in my 'Juliet.' I secured the portrait of him which the police picked up and began to look for him diligently. I hunted the foreign quarters of London, I spent hours, days, aye, weeks in the cafés and restaurants frequented by foreigners, always seeking a face, the face of the man whose counterfeit presentment I carried in my breast-pocket. I had other copies made of that photograph, and gave them to friends of mine whose occupation or tastes took them into the haunts of foreigners. It seemed the best clue that we had. And yet it was hopelessly weak, I felt that from the first. There was no name on the card, no address, nothing to show where or by whom the photograph was taken.

I do not think that I ever gave up hope altogether, but at the end of the year there came upon me that awful sickness of heart which only hope deferred and disappointed can cause. For me it had been a terrible year. I had lost my wife with all the horror of uncertainty as to her fate. Had I found her dead it had been better than to know that she had disappeared from me in a fashion that suggested all manner of nameless horrors. I had searched for her and found no trace of her. Now it seemed to me that it was utterly useless to do more. My resources were almost exhausted, for I had earned no money during that twelve months of sickening suspense, and all that I had previously saved had been spent in my efforts to find Helen. And I was no nearer finding her at the end of the year than at the beginning.

I sat in my studio one afternoon, staring vacantly at a canvas that stood upon the easel near the window. It had its back turned to me; I had turned it that way months before, for it was the picture upon which I had been working when Helen left me, and I had never felt able to look at it after realising her loss. I wondered if I should ever paint again, if

years would heal my wound, if time would soothe the gnawing agitation that still possessed me. I got up and began to pace up and down the room, all the bitterness of the past year welling up afresh within my heart, and it was while I was thus sorrowfully engaged that I heard a hesitating knock at the door. It was so faint that at first I paid no heed to it, but when it was repeated in a louder though still curiously hesitating fashion, I went over and opened the door and looked out.

The landing was dim with shadows and at first I saw no one. But presently I caught sight of the figure of a man standing within the gloom. He breathed my name in a low voice.

'Mr Vincent—the painter?' he whispered, questioningly.

'Yes,' I replied. 'Who are you? Come in; I can't see you there.'

'Are you alone?' he asked. 'Quite alone?'

'I am quite alone. Come in; why do you stand there?'

I drew back and motioned him to enter. The man stepped out of the gloomy shadows and followed me. A tall, black-haired, black-bearded man with a great cloak and slouched hat. He put the door to behind him, and at the same instant looked round my studio as I have seen captive wild beasts look round a cage. And there was something in the glitter of his eyes that made my heart suddenly leap in my side and then begin to beat with an awful sense of fear or hope, I knew not which.

'Ah!' I cried. 'It is you, the man whom I saw before my picture?' He turned and looked at me, and as he looked he put up his hand and pulled off wig and beard. Then of course I recognised him perfectly. Those were the same eyes that had haunted me, but the face was changed. It spoke of suffering, privation; there was a nameless horror in it.

'Yes,' he said, 'yes, it was I that you saw there. I saw you too. I was looking at your "Juliet." The picture of your wife.'

He walked slowly across the room, and then I noticed that he limped and shuffled in his walk. He dropped wearily into a chair and faced me again. I went up to him with a curious feeling at my heart.

'Why have you come here?' I cried. 'Do you know that I have been searching for you for a year? Why have you come? Is it—'

'To tell you of your wife,' he said. 'Yes, that is it. I have endured much to do that. But I promised her.'

I nerved myself with an effort and tried to speak, but my tongue had grown dry.

'Go on!' I said at last, the words rattling in my mouth. 'Where?'

'She is in the fortress of St Peter and Paul,' he answered. 'I was there, too, until they sent me off to Siberia. I escaped *en route*, you understand?'

I understood nothing. I sank into the nearest chair and stared at him.

'I am Ivanovitch,' he said. 'Stepan Ivanovitch. It may be that she never mentioned me, why should she? I was also an artist;



we met in St Petersburg; it is now a long time ago.'

Still I continued to stare at him. Was it a dream? Was this great, gaunt, hollow-cheeked man with the half-mad eyes the figment of a vision? I put out my hand mechanically and touched his sleeve. He looked at me curiously. Yet I could not believe. My wife, my Helen, a prisoner in St Peter and Paul! Impossible! impossible!

I rose and tottered rather than walked across the room to a little cabinet in which I kept a spirit-case. I poured out some brandy and drank it at a gulp. The strong spirit revived me. I turned to the man and felt prepared to hear him. He looked wistfully at the spirit-case, and I filled a glass and handed it to him.

'Now speak,' I said. 'Tell me all. I don't understand; make it plain to me.'

'Da!' he said, 'but it is so plain, when one knows how these things are done. So plain—oh yes, so very plain. Your wife and I were arrested in Kensington Gardens—it must be a year ago—by the agents of the Russian police. We had met there—it was accident, that—and we were talking, for we knew many people in Petersburg, and then they were upon us, for they had been on the outlook for me and her too, and all was quiet just there, and they had their conveyance waiting and we were aboard their ship in the Thames, oh, so quick! It is this way,' he said, glancing at me; 'they work quietly, but surely. Da! what can you expect?'

'But their motive?' I cried. 'What motive had they in arresting my wife?'

The man shrugged his shoulders. 'Nu! as if one should know that! But she and I, we were both members of a little circle in Petersburg—it was literary, artistic, you understand? and some of us afterwards—well, we were not well seen of the Government. Not she, you know, not she at all! But her name was on the rolls, and when they decided on arresting us, of course they included her amongst the rest.'

I stared at him in sheer amazement. 'Do you mean to say,' I asked, 'that the Russian police track people down like that?'

He sipped the brandy in his glass, and glanced at me curiously.

'I mean to say,' he answered, 'that if they are on the lookout for you they will find you, even though you retreat to the uttermost corners of the earth.'

'But their evidence?' I cried; 'their evidence against my wife? What have they to bring against her?'

'Nothing, but that she was member of a circle, other members of which are known as the most implacable Nihilists of the day. Ah, that circle! Alexis—they killed him—and Olga—she is in Siberia—and so, too, are Lyof, and Anna, and Stiva, and there was Sonya—she has disappeared—Da! it is curious how unfortunate we have all been.'

'And my wife?'

'She is in St Peter and Paul; I know she is there, though I never saw her. I never saw her after they had us in the carriage to-

gether, but she knew what had happened, and she said two words to me and I two to her, and they meant that I would escape if I could and find you. And I did—we were on the way to Siberia; she was not in the gang, I made sure of that. She is there, they will keep her there, oh, perhaps a very long time.'

'And may they release her in the end?'

'Da!' he spat contemptuously on the floor. 'Release an Englishwoman? To tell her story here in England? You are mad to think of that.'

'Then what am I to do?'

He shrugged his shoulders with a hopeless gesture. 'There are means,' he said. 'Something may be done; we will take counsel.'

So at last I knew where my wife was. But the knowledge brought me no peace. I was rather stirred up to a fever of horrible revolt at my powerlessness to help her. What could I do? My resources were drained, I had few friends, and there was the awful, adamant Russian police system to attack, singlehanded. I felt sick at heart, broken down, as I thought of my own weakness and of the strength of those whom I must fight. It was so hard to feel myself there in London, moneyless, and unable, because of my great anxiety, to work, while she, my wife, was a prisoner in that terrible fortress—or on the way to Siberia. For a while Stepan Ivanovitch's news seemed to paralyse me. But desperation set me to work. I began to seek out ways and means. A brilliant idea struck me—the purchaser of my picture 'Romeo and Juliet' was no less a person than Lord A—, the then Foreign Secretary! I would go to him; surely he would help me. And there was the Prince Z—, in whose family Helen had been governess; he, too, would not refuse his aid. I thought of these things and took courage. That evening I spent in drawing up a statement of my case. The next morning I called upon Lord A—, and saw him personally. And when I left him it was with new hope, and yet he had told me kindly enough not to be too sure of success, for the matter bristled with difficulties and obstacles. A week later I saw Lord A— again. He told me that the matter must now pass entirely out of my hands. I was to leave it with him and with Prince Z—, who happened to be in London at the time. All that I could do was to wait for the result. There was a kindly pressure in his hand as he dismissed me that gave me new confidence. Nor was that confidence misplaced. A month later Lord A— sent for me one morning, and after giving me a hearty greeting that made my heart beat with expectant hope, showed me into a small cabinet adjoining his room. He pushed me in and closed the door quickly after me, and I turned and found—my wife!

I am afraid it was some time before we left the room, for we forgot everything but ourselves. But at last we came out to thank Lord A— for all he had done for us.

'No more flirtations with the disaffected, you know, Mrs Vincent,' he said as he bade us farewell.

'But it was so innocent!' said Helen. 'We

were just half-a-dozen young people who met to discuss'—

'Never discuss!' said his lordship laughingly. 'At any rate unless you are safe in South Kensington. Good-bye!'

### THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

MUCH excitement has been caused by the report of certain experiments by Professor Röntgen of Würzburg with Crookes's radiant-matter-tubes. Such a tube, when electrically excited, gives off not only light waves, but radiations of a totally distinct character, the nature of which has not yet been determined. These radiations will penetrate wood, ebonite, leather, and other opaque substances, including most of the metals; but glass, which is so transparent to ordinary light, is opaque to them. It therefore becomes possible to affect a photographic plate shut up in a wooden box, and the shadows of different articles placed on that box are permanently impressed upon the plate. The most curious result yet attained is by placing the living hand above such a box, when it is found that the radiations are stopped by the bony structures but not by the flesh. The result is a photograph, or rather shadow of a skeleton hand. These experiments have lately been repeated in this country, and specimens were reproduced in *Nature* of January 23d. They may be regarded as a further development of the researches of Crookes, Hertz, Lenard and others, but in such a form as to excite the interest and curiosity of a wonder-loving public.

As our readers know, constant war has been waged during the past fifteen years upon the rabbits of Australia. In 1881 a member of the New South Wales legislature expressed his disappointment that the Government programme did not include any scheme for dealing with what he regarded as a most important question. But he was laughed at for his pains and told that a bill might as reasonably be introduced for the extermination of the lively flea. But now the laugh is on the wrong side, for the rabbits have increased and multiplied to such an extent that the loss to the colonies concerned, by their depredations, amounts to millions of pounds sterling. Every remedy has been tried: poisons, stoats, weasels, cats, armies of men, and hundreds of miles of rabbit-proof netting. Millions of rabbits have been destroyed by these various agencies, but the animals are so prolific that if a district be almost cleared of them, in twelve months they are as numerous as ever. It is now agreed that the evil has been battled with too late, and that the winners in the war are the rabbits.

As might have been expected, the cheapening of electric glow-lamps, owing to the expiration of patent rights, has led to a serious deterioration in the quality of the articles supplied. Of course this does not apply to the best firms who make such things, but to others who have rushed into the business without the experience which successful manufacture of

such delicate articles demands. In Germany the mischief is so great that a committee has been appointed to inquire into the whole matter, and it is stated that the result will be a system of standardising which will lead to the rejection of hundreds of faulty lamps. It is probable that these latter may be thrown upon the English market, so that users in this country will do well to be on their guard. In the meantime, Mr Preece, the post-office electrician, who has some 50,000 glow-lamps under his control, is making experiments, the results of which, it is hoped, may assume such a practical form that it will become possible by noting the behaviour of a filament during one hour of incandescence, to estimate its probable longevity.

Professor McKendrick's series of six lectures at the Royal Institution (London) on 'Sound, Speech, and Hearing' came to a conclusion last month. Perhaps the most interesting lecture was the concluding one, when the professor explained the mechanism by which insects, birds, and mammals produced the varied sounds peculiar to them. It was shown, experimentally, that the tones in the human voice came from the vibrations of the elastic folds connected with the larynx which are known as the vocal chords, and a model of the parts, in which the chords were represented by thin india-rubber capable of being tightened and relaxed by attached mechanism, was made to sing the diatonic scale with accuracy. The model could also say 'Papa' and 'Mamma,' but here its vocal efforts ceased. We are reminded, by these experiments, that a talking machine which employed india-rubber chords, lips, palate, &c., was exhibited in London about twenty years ago. It was most ingenious in construction and was worked by a keyboard. Unfortunately it took almost a life-time to learn how to manage it, and then the results were not very satisfactory. It was of course totally eclipsed by the phonograph.

One of the most curious agricultural products known, if it can be placed in such a category, is cochineal, the chief seat of which industry has for many years been the Canary Islands. The story of the establishment of cochineal culture in the islands is a curious one. In 1835 a native gentleman became acquainted with the methods pursued for producing this dye in Honduras, and brought with him from that place specimens of the cochineal insect and the cactus upon which it thrives. At that time the wine growers at the Canaries were flourishing, and no other kind of industry was believed in. The culture of the cochineal was regarded as a mad freak, and its introducer met with opposition on all sides. Then the dreaded phylloxera made its appearance in the vineyards and ruin faced the wine growers. They were glad indeed to take up the despised cochineal, and the old vineyards were given up to the new industry with such success that in one year the value of the exported dye reached not far short of one million sterling. The introduction of aniline dyes changed all this, and it is feared that the cochineal industry can never regain its former position in the Canary Islands. We gather

the above facts from an interesting article in the *Produce World*.

It would seem from the statistics given in a recent bulletin of the ministry of agriculture, that France will in a few years be as destitute of wolves as Britain has been for some centuries. For a long time the French Government has put a price on the heads of these ferocious animals, and the figures given represent the number of premiums demanded rather than the number of slain. Last year the figures published were two hundred and forty-five, as against two hundred and sixty-one in the previous year, the total having decreased during the last thirteen years, although the reward has been made greater. In 1884 the wolves accounted for numbered thirteen hundred and sixteen, but in many departments where they were formerly numerous they are now quite extinct. The majority of those now killed are in the central region of France, and in contiguous departments. The eastern departments of the country used to furnish the greatest number of wolves, but the animals are now rarely found in those districts.

The number of railway servants injured or killed during the operation of shunting and coupling up vehicles is terribly large, and some hundreds of patents have been taken out with the object of making the dangerous operation of coupling so far automatic that men need not get between the trucks or carriages. At a trial of these inventions about ten years ago, prizes were awarded to some of the best, and since then many other contrivances have been devised. Among these, the automatic coupling patented by Mr A. B. Ibbotson has recently been shown in London. It is so arranged that when two vehicles come together they are immediately locked, unless, that is, it is desired that they should merely push one another without joining together, when the turn of a handle, which can be worked from either side of the carriage, prevents the automatic arrangement from acting. A vehicle having the patent attachment can be coupled up to another furnished with the ordinary link, and the amount of slack between any two vehicles can be easily regulated. The new invention seems to promise well.

We are glad to see that it is proposed to erect a monument, in the town of Dôle (Jura), where he was born, to the memory of the late Louis Pasteur, who may justly be regarded as one of the greatest men France has produced. A committee, at the head of which is M. Felix Faure, President of the Republic, has been formed to carry out the work, and subscriptions are invited from all. The work to which Pasteur devoted his life would require a volume to describe in anything like detail, and we can only name here one of his achievements. He was the first to demonstrate that certain tiny rod-like bodies (bacteria) were the sole exciting cause of anthrax, or splenic fever in cattle, and to point the way to its prevention by inoculation. Three years ago it was stated that two and a half million sheep, three hundred and twenty thousand horned cattle, and two thousand eight hundred and sixty-one horses had been inoculated from the Institute Pasteur—and material had been sent to India for the

inoculation of one thousand elephants. It is not too much to say that by Pasteur's researches splenic fever has been conquered as effectually as Jenner vanquished smallpox; moreover, he pointed the way by which it may be reasonably hoped that many of the dire diseases which affect man may be successfully grappled with.

The increase in the number of electric mains in our streets during the past year has been very marked, and has been brought unpleasantly before the notice of wayfarers by excavated roads and upturned footpaths. With increased facilities for obtaining the electric current, many new applications of it have been brought forward, and among these is its adaptation to the purposes of projection in the optical or magic lantern, and its use in theatres as a substitute for the lime light. The latter form of light requires the presence of oxygen and hydrogen gases under pressure, and although of late years the apparatus employed has been greatly simplified, it is still cumbersome and possesses drawbacks which make it compare very unfavourably with the two simple wires which form the only visible agents of the far more brilliant electric arc-light. A new form of lamp, or regulator, to furnish an electric arc-light for the purposes just indicated, has recently been patented by Mr C. M. Hepworth, and has been introduced under the name of the Ross-Hepworth projection lamp by Messrs Ross, the well-known opticians of London. This apparatus gives a steady, brilliant light, and has all the necessary movements to fit it for the purpose for which it is designed.

A new kind of nozzle for fire-hose has recently been introduced into this country from the United States, where it is said to have met with much favour. The nozzle is bell shaped, and within it is a ball which causes the jet of water, as it proceeds from the nozzle, to form a cone shape, which is found very effective in quenching fire, without causing the mechanical injury to fittings which accompanies the use of the ordinary jet. A good deal of wonder has been excited by the circumstance that, although the ball is perfectly free, it keeps its position in a stream of water at one hundred pounds pressure without flying off into space. The same surprise was excited many years back, when it was found that egg-shells, india-rubber balls, &c. could be made to hang in mid-air, by the action of a jet of steam, and experiments have more recently been made in connection with compressed air, which give precisely the same results. Faraday long ago gave the true explanation when he showed that the issuing jet of steam under pressure causes induced currents of air to press upon it from all sides, and it is these which are able to support solid bodies submitted to its influence. The action of the ball in the water-nozzle may doubtless be explained in the same way.

The cheapened production of the metal aluminum, which has led of recent years to its greatly extended use for so many purposes, has tempted many to start factories for its reduction from the earths with which it is combined, and the process most generally adopted is electrolysis. The great drawback to the use of the metal is the ease with which it

loses its lustre, unless well lacquered, and the deterioration is known as rusting. An explanation of the cause of this tarnishing has been offered to the Paris Academy of Sciences by M. Henry Moissan, who has shown that aluminum produced by electrolysis contains from one to three per cent. of sodium, a metal which shows a tarnished surface half a minute after a clean face has been exposed to the atmosphere. It is easy to see how the presence of such an easily oxidisable component can lead to the rusting of the aluminum, and now that the evil has been traced to its source, a remedy for it should not be difficult to find.

It is not often that the inhabitants of Britain have a chance of beholding a total eclipse of the sun; however, such a chance will come in August next to those who possess the leisure and means to take a trip across the North Sea to Norway. It is such a common holiday trip that hundreds will probably avail themselves of the facilities offered by the different steamship companies for viewing the eclipse. It was in 1851 that a small band of scientific men observed a solar eclipse from Bue Island, Norway. But in half a century the world has learnt many things, and among them the art of carrying sightseers to all parts of the world with speed, safety, and in comfort. The crowds of holiday makers who will proceed to Norway to see the eclipse on August 9th, have only one thing to fear, and that is, that at the critical moment the sky may be overcast and the sun hidden from view.

The President of the Sanitary Inspectors' Association, Sir B. W. Richardson, in delivering his annual address to that body, touched upon many things which are of interest to the community at large. It was the duty of sanitary inspectors to teach cleanliness in dress, food, and drink; in the home, and even in the air we breathed. Man was rather given towards gluttony than starvation, and he was in favour of the vegetarian system of feeding, although it was not a perfect system, while with regard to drinking, water was the only liquid required. Work did not often kill, but labour of one kind should not be prolonged more than eight or nine hours, and when the time of recreation came, the mind should have such change of pursuit as would cultivate muscular effort, and bring into play the various senses. Good sanitation would do much for the working classes, and although it was sometimes difficult to combine cleanliness with poverty, still it could be done, especially if we recognised on what few ministrations health depended.

At Edinburgh recently, Mr J. R. Cameron lectured on the 'Bacterial Constituents of Milk,' and alluded to the practice (discussed in *Chambers's Journal* for 19th October 1895) of adding boracic acid to milk as a preservative, which he condemned. The usual dose was one ounce of acid to ten gallons of milk, an addition which was especially injurious to children, and had a bad effect generally upon the mucous membrane and upon the kidneys. Another danger arose from the circumstance that milk might have a preservative added to it before being sent to the retail dealer, and the latter being ignorant of the fact added some more, thus doubling the

injurious action to the prejudice of the unfortunate consumer. Several cases of illness have been reported from the use of boracic acid, and in the German navy it has been prohibited as a preservative for meat. Salicylic acid is another injurious antiseptic, and this has already been forbidden in France as a food preservative. There are other antiseptics which are equally objectionable, benzoic acid, for example, which produces a peculiar irritation in the throat, and formaline, which is a powerful irritant to the eyes and mucous membrane. All these drugs are used in milk with impunity, a prosecution being almost unknown, and there is reason to believe that they are also commonly used in cream and butter.

It is well known that prospectors have often had to turn back from promising gold districts for want of water, for without water little mining can be done. The dry process, as applied to gold-mining, which has been introduced by Messrs Harvey & Co., 11 Queen Victoria Street, London, will therefore be regarded with interest. The ore is first submitted to a stone-breaker, which reduces the pieces to the size of an egg; it is then screened and submitted to another breaker, and finally to crushing rollers, which reduce the rock to fine powder. It is then ready for leaching by the cyanide or other process. Manual labour is almost entirely dispensed with, from the time the rough quartz is fed into the machine, until it is delivered in a finished condition.

#### PRIÈRE.

FROM THE FRENCH OF SULLY PRUDHOMME.

If you knew the heart is sore,  
That dwells apart without a home;  
At times before my lonely door,  
Your steps might roam.

If you knew how thoughts are bright,  
When sad souls feel a tender glance;  
Your eyes would seek my window-light,  
As if by chance.

If you knew the healing cheer,  
A heart can to another bring;  
You sure would, like a sister dear,  
Sit near and sing.

If you knew I love you so,  
If you knew your soul's true place;  
You e'en might enter, soft and low,  
In simple grace!

WALTER GURNER.

#### \* \* TO CONTRIBUTORS.

- 1st. All communications should be addressed to the 'Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.'
- 2d. For its return in case of ineligibility, postage-stamps should accompany every manuscript.
- 3d. To secure their safe return if ineligible, ALL MANUSCRIPTS, whether accompanied by a letter of advice or otherwise, should have the writer's Name and Address written upon them in FULL.
- 4th. Poetical contributions should invariably be accompanied by a stamped and directed envelope.

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